

[When she was a young woman]

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Apporx. 333 Words

(Verbatim Conversation)

The story related here in an experience that Ophelia bad when she was a young woman. At the time she led liked nothing better than to dress herself in all the finery she possesse possessed , which often aroused the envy of her associates. There was one neighbor in particular before whom she took great pleasure in “showing off” when dressed in her best.

“De Holy Sculpture say: 'Lub thy neighbbor as thyself,' but ef you hab a neighbor lak dat colored gal what lib two do (door) next to me but one house, it defame you bery soul to look in dat slack eye she hab an' say 'I lub you honey.' One day I come home onexpected an' dare she be in me house. She aint oughter be een dere, but dat fedder boarer (boa) in me bureau drawer ontice dat gal to come dere, an' I axe you was it lub dat crawl up me back bone an' mak me hand rech (reach) out an' grab dat gal by de hair befo' 'e foot git her nowhere? I hab time dat night to t'ink 'bout what I done, an' down on me knee I bend. I tell de Lord de whole t'ing, how I wuk ha had (hard) to buy dem neck fedder, an' I aint wanna gib em up widout a fight. An' I say to de Lord, 'O Lord! ef somebody come 'long an' snatch de wing off one ob you angel, what dey go do 'bout em? Tell me Lord, cause I sorry I done trifle wid dat poor gal weak sperrit. She aint mean to do nuttin but borrow dem fedder, an' I go lend 2 em too, when we two git out ob dis jail house.' I done sob meself

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sick. I aint ebber been in no jail befo.' O Lord! hear de prayer ob you poor serbant (servant) in distress!

After the case was heard, Ophelia was set free with no other punishment than the humiliation of spending a night in jail.

Source: Ophelia Jemison, Addison Court, Charleston, S. C.